

category there would be included service-connected disease or injuries of any evaluation (even though evaluated as 100 percent disabling) but of a quiescent or static nature involving muscular or skeletal functions and not materially affecting other vital body functions.

(3) Service-connected diseases or injuries involving active processes affecting vital organs should receive careful consideration as a contributory cause of death, the primary cause being unrelated, from the viewpoint of whether there were resulting debilitating effects and general impairment of health to an extent that would render the person materially less capable of resisting the effects of other disease or injury primarily causing death. Where the service-connected condition affects vital organs as distinguished from muscular or skeletal functions and is evaluated as 100 percent disabling, debilitation may be assumed.

(4) There are primary causes of death which by their very nature are so overwhelming that eventual death can be anticipated irrespective of coexisting conditions, but, even in such cases, there is for consideration whether there may be a reasonable basis for holding that a service-connected condition was of such severity as to have a material influence in accelerating death. In this situation, however, it would not generally be reasonable to hold that a service-connected condition accelerated death unless such condition affected a vital organ and was of itself of a progressive or debilitating nature.

CROSS REFERENCES: Reasonable doubt. See §3.102. Service connection for mental unsoundness in suicide. See §3.302.

[26 FR 1582, Feb. 24, 1961, as amended at 54 FR 34981, Aug. 23, 1989; 54 FR 42803, Oct. 18, 1989]

§3.313 Claims based on service in Vietnam.

(a) *Service in Vietnam.* Service in Vietnam includes service in the waters offshore, or service in other locations if the conditions of service involved duty or visitation in Vietnam.

(b) *Service connection based on service in Vietnam.* Service in Vietnam during

the Vietnam Era together with the development of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma manifested subsequent to such service is sufficient to establish service connection for that disease.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501)

[55 FR 43124, Oct. 26, 1990]

§3.314 Basic pension determinations.

(a) *Prior to the Mexican border period.* While pensions are granted based on certain service prior to the Mexican border period, the only rating factors in claims therefor are:

(1) Claims based on service of less than 90 days in the Spanish-American War require a rating determination as to whether the veteran was discharged or released from service for a service-connected disability or had at the time of separation from service a service-connected disability, shown by official service records, which in medical judgment would have warranted a discharge for disability. Eligibility in such cases requires a finding that the disability was incurred in or aggravated by service in line of duty without benefit of presumptive provisions of law or Department of Veterans Affairs regulations.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1512)

(2) Veterans entitled to pension on the basis of service in the Spanish-American War may be entitled to an increased rate of pension if rated as being in need of regular aid and attendance. Veterans who have elected pension under Pub. L. 86-211 (73 Stat. 432) who are not rated as being in need of regular aid and attendance may be entitled to increased pension based on 100 percent permanent disability together with independent disability of 60 percent or more or by reason of being permanently housebound as provided in §3.351 (d).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1502 (b), (c), 512)

(b) *Mexican border period and later war periods.* Non-service-connected disability and death pension may be paid based on service in the Mexican border period, World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict and the Vietnam era. Rating determinations in such claims

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will be required in the following situations:

(1) Claims based on service of less than 90 days may require a determination as to whether the veteran was discharged or released from service for a service-connected disability or had at the time of separation from service a service-connected disability, shown by official service records, which in medical judgment would have warranted a discharge for disability. Eligibility in such cases requires a finding that the disability was incurred in or aggravated by service in line of duty without benefit of presumptive provisions of law or Department of Veterans Affairs regulations (38 U.S.C. 1521(g)(2)) unless, in the case of death pension, the veteran was, at the time of death, receiving (or entitled to receive) compensation or retirement pay based upon a wartime service-connected disability.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1541(a) and 1542(a))

(2) Determinations of permanent total disability for pension purposes will be based on non-service-connected disability or combined non-service-connected and service-connected disabilities not the result of willful misconduct. However, for pension under Pub. L. 86-211 (73 Stat. 432), permanent and total disability will be presumed where the veteran has attained age 65 or effective January 1, 1977, where the veteran became unemployable after age 65.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1502(a), 1523(a))

(3) Veterans entitled to nonservice-connected disability pension may be entitled to an increased rate of pension if rated as being in need of regular aid and attendance. Veterans entitled to protected pension or pension under Pub. L. 86-211 (73 Stat. 432) who are not rated as being in need of regular aid and attendance may be entitled to increased pension based on a 100 percent permanent disability together with independent disability of 60 percent or more or by reason of being perma-

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nently housebound as provided in § 3.351 (d) or (e).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1502 (b), (c), 1521)

[31 FR 4680, Mar. 19, 1966, as amended at 32 FR 13224, Sept. 19, 1967; 36 FR 8446, May 6, 1971; 40 FR 56434, Dec. 3, 1975; 41 FR 56804, Dec. 30, 1976; 61 FR 20438, May 7, 1996]

§ 3.315 Basic eligibility determinations; dependents, loans, education.

(a) *Child over 18 years.* A child of a veteran may be considered a "child" after age 18 for purposes of benefits under title 38, United States Code (except ch. 19 and sec. 8502(b) of ch. 85), if found by a rating determination to have become, prior to age 18, permanently incapable of self-support.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 101(4)(B))

(b) *Loans.* If a veteran of World War II the Korean conflict or the Vietnam era had less than 90 days of service, or if a veteran who served after July 25, 1947, and prior to June 27, 1950, or after January 31, 1955, and prior to August 5, 1964, or after May 7, 1975, has less than 181 days of service on active duty as defined in §§ 36.4301 and 36.4501, eligibility of the veteran for a loan under 38 U.S.C. ch. 37 requires a determination that the veteran was discharged or released because of a service-connected disability or that the official service department records show that he or she had at the time of separation from service a service-connected disability which in medical judgment would have warranted a discharge for disability. These determinations are subject to the presumption of incurrence under § 3.304(b). Determinations based on World War II, Korean conflict and Vietnam era service are also subject to the presumption of aggravation under § 3.306(b) while determination based on service on or after February 1, 1955, and before August 5, 1964, or after May 7, 1975, are subject to the presumption of aggravation under § 3.306 (a) and (c). The provisions of this paragraph are also applicable, regardless of length of service, in determining eligibility to the maximum period of entitlement based on discharge or release for a service-connected disability. (See also